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ABSTRACT

Results are presented of a survey that investigated whether state agencies involved in licensure and/or program approval require "outcomes" information from colleges and universities. A brief questionnaire was completed by 45 State Higher Education Executive Officers members. For purposes of the survey, outcomes information was limited to followup studies of graduates. For each state/territory, a chart indicates whether there are current requirements or future plans for requirements for outcomes information. For 20 states, additional information is presented on their requirements. Nine of the states/territories have a current requirement for outcomes information for some aspect of licensure, accreditation, program review, or renewal. While 30 respondents have no current or future plan for an outcomes information requirement, 6 have no current requirement but do have future plans for one. It is concluded that most state agencies do not currently have or intend to have an outcomes requirement as defined in the study. However, there is some evidence of movement toward greater accountability through program review. It appears that the greater the requirement for outcomes information, the closer the state agency seems tied to traditional accreditation concepts and assessment of quality. (SW)

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SUMMARY

Survey Results: Findings and Analysis

Outcomes Data Required by State Approval/Licensure Agencies

April, 1984

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Introduction (Purpose and Methodology)

Since there has been a great deal of discussion recently concerning information requirements of state higher education agencies as well as the assumption that many of these agencies have moved to revise regulations to include requirements for planning and "outcomes" data, it was assumed that a simple survey would assist in providing more objective information on the subject.

Thus, in an attempt to determine the extent to which state agencies involved in licensure and/or program approval require "outcomes" information from colleges and universities, a brief questionnaire was developed and sent to all SHEEO (State Higher Education Executive Officers) members. This represented a mailing of 52 questionnaires, of which 45 were completed and returned for tabulation and analysis. The survey forms - some with attached portions of regulations, guidelines or statutes - were arranged in alpha order by the reporting state agency. Next, the "Yes" or "No" responses were tabulated on a chart showing "current" and "future" outcomes requirements of the agencies (i.e., related to items 1 and 3) and any narrative responses to items 1 and 3 were recorded as notes to the chart. From these data it was possible to identify current and future efforts to include "outcomes" as a requirement and to highlight trends in and possible implications of the data. In order not to confuse the issue, a rather narrow definition of "outcomes" was suggested on the questionnaire (i.e. follow-up studies of graduates). Obviously, a broader application of "outcomes" to include requirements for program review itself could have produced from the data different results and conclusions.

Even though the attached tables (1,2, and 3) provide a wealth of information about the matter of state requirements for outcomes information, some further discussion of the findings may be appropriate. Table 1 gives a detailed accounting of the responses; Table 2 gives an analysis of the findings, and Table 3 reveals only those states which have an "outcomes" reporting requirement by region.

To summarize: state agencies presently requiring some type of "outcomes" data are: Alaska, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, and West Virginia. If one would add Alabama, Arkansas, Maine, Maryland, North Carolina, and Oregon to the affirmative column in the future, there would still be only 15 out of 45 agencies reporting with, or leaning to such a requirement. Even some of the state agencies which responded in the affirmative to item #1 regarding a current "outcomes" requirement did not provide evidence of a real "outcomes" data requirement (cf. notes to Table 1).

On the other hand, some answering "no" to item #1 regarding current reference to "outcomes" information apparently collect and/or examine data on placement, number of graduates, or graduate follow up. These include Arkansas, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Vermont.

Conclusion:

While it is clear that most state agencies do not currently have or intend to have an "outcomes" requirement as defined in this study, there is some evidence of movement toward greater accountability through program review. In at least two states where agencies can be described as quasi-accrediting bodies (i.e., New York and Oklahoma) there, indeed, is more of an "outcomes" requirement. For it would appear that the greater the requirement for "outcomes" information, the closer the state agency would appear to be tied to traditional accreditation concepts and assessment of quality. To be sure, the traditional role of the state licensure and approval agencies has been focused on input and process criteria, while accrediting agencies have focused (or should have focused) more on outcomes criteria. Whether or not this will continue to be the case will depend largely upon changes in the perception of roles of state agencies and accrediting bodies.

TABLE 1

OUTCOMES INFORMATION REQUIREMENT

AGENCY (State/Territory)	CURRENT		FUTURE		NOTES
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Alabama		x	x		1
Alaska	x			x	2
Arizona		x		x	
Arkansas		x	x		3
California		x		x	
Colorado		x		x	
Connecticut		x		x	
Florida	x				4
Georgia		x		x	
Hawaii		x		x	
Idaho		x		x	
Illinois		x		x	
Indiana	x				5
Iowa	x				6
Kentucky		x		x	
Louisiana		x		x	
Maine		x	x		7
Maryland		x	x		8
Massachusetts		x		x	
Minnesota		x		x	
Mississippi		x		x	9
Missouri	x				10
Montana		x		x	
Nebraska		x		x	11
Nevada		x		x	
New Hampshire		x		x	
New Jersey	x				12
New York	x			x	13
North Carolina		x	x		14
North Dakota		x		x	
Oklahoma	x				15
Oregon		x	x		16
Pennsylvania		x		x	17
Puerto Rico		x		x	
Rhode Island		x		x	
South Carolina		x		x	18
South Dakota		x		x	
Texas		x		x	
Utah		x		x	
Vermont		x		x	19
Virginia		x		x	
Washington		x		x	
West Virginia	x				20
Wisconsin		x		x	
Wyoming		x		x	

NOTES (See Table 1)

1. Alabama - #3, Yes - Plans to include outcomes data (e.g. graduate follow-up) when reviewing existing programs in 1984.

2. Alaska - #1, Yes - Not mandatory reporting requirements. "Satisfactory completion of course of study" constitutes "outcomes" requirement.

3. Arkansas - #1, No - Only placement information for occupational programs is examined.

4. Florida - #1, Yes - Reference is made to Standard 10: Student Personnel Services, but no mention is made of "outcomes".

5. Indiana - #1, Yes - Program reviews done on a 6-year cycle require information on "Quality and Success" of programs (i.e., success of graduates, retention/attrition, accreditation status, congruence between program goals and institutional mission, etc.).

6. Iowa - #1, Yes - Requires information on follow-up of graduates, success on professional exams and in employment.

7. Maine - #3, Yes - Reports proposed legislation to change teacher certification so that "outcomes data" can be used in determining sequential certificates.

8. Maryland - #3, Yes - This type of information will be considered when standards are revised. Currently, follow-up studies of graduates are required.

9. Mississippi - #1, No - Requires information on the number of graduates only.

10. Missouri - #1, Yes - New procedures for review of existing programs include requirements for data on placement of graduates.

11. Nebraska - #3, No - However, proposed legislation would require the agency to include information on the number of graduates in program reviews of public institutions.

12. New Jersey - #1, Yes - Indicates that State "statutes empower the Board to require from institutions of higher education such reports as may be necessary...." Currently, data relative to degrees conferred, attrition/retention, community college transfers, and professional licensure examination results are collected.

13. New York - #1, Yes - Commissioner's regulations include references to publication of retention and placement statistics in catalogs as well as requirements that institutions grant credit only to students who have met course objectives and to hire and retain faculty who have demonstrated competence. However, no specific reference is made to the word "outcomes".

14. North Carolina- #3, Yes - Plan to include information on outcomes as a criterion in new regulations provided meaningful measuring instruments can be developed.

15. Oklahoma - #1, Yes - Regents guidelines for the licensure and accreditation of institutions of higher learning require regional accreditation, information on placement and follow-up of graduates, and licensure examination results. More important, there are specific requirements for ongoing self-assessment and external evaluation by consultants or peer groups.

16. Oregon - #3, Yes - Consideration will be given to the inclusion of information on outcomes in future regulations.

17. Pennsylvania - #1, No - Agency reports that its staff follows up on "outcomes" recommendations made by visiting teams.

18. South Carolina- #1, No - No "outcomes information required of non-public institutions. For public institutions, evaluations of existing programs are expected "to provide data on jobs or careers being pursued by graduates, by category". Agency adds: "Few can do so reliably".

19. Vermont - #1, No - Reviews of existing programs in public system are expected to address "placement of graduates in employment situations and graduate schools".

20. West Virginia - #1, Yes - "Institutional licensure requires 'outcomes' information only insofar as data are required by the appropriate institutional accreditation agency, and...as required for renewal of the Board of Regents' approval."

Further, initiation of new programs and the continuation of existing programs require the submission of information on program "outcomes". Policy and administrative bulletins of the agency clearly specify that program results must be reported and should include data on trends in enrollment, patterns of graduates.

LEGEND:

- Numbers 1-18 refer to NOTES regarding STATE AGENCY RESPONSES.

- #1 and #3 refer to items on Questionnaire:

  1. Do your institutional licensure or program approval standards/requirements include reference to "outcomes" data?

     Yes/No

  3. If information on outcomes is not required currently, are there plans to revise regulations to include such data?

     Yes/No

TABLE 2

Number of Responses	"OUTCOMES" REQUIREMENT STATUS
30	No current or future plan for an outcomes information requirement.
6	No current requirement, but future plan for inclusion of outcomes information.
9	Current requirement for inclusion of outcomes information for some aspect of licensure, accreditation, program review or renewal.
45	Total Number of Respondents

TABLE 3

STATES REPORTING OUTCOMES REQUIREMENT

(By Accrediting Region)

Region		States
Middle States	2	New Jersey, New York
New England	0	_
North Central	5	Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, West Virginia
Northwest	1	Alaska
Southern	1	Florida
Western	0	_
All Regions	9	